

We need to be smart about where we are going here. The GDP of our country is measured by our total expenditures of consumption of the American people, it is measured by our investments, it is measured by government spending and investment, and by our exports minus our imports. That is the GDP. That is how you measure GDP. How can these folks sit here and say if you cut the government spending you are not going to cut the GDP, which is what every major economic analysis has said?

So yes, we have to cut waste; yes, we have to cut some spending; yes, we have to be responsible. But let us be responsible in a responsible way, by looking at the overall budget and the places we can reduce, at a tempo that doesn't do injury to our ability to invest in America's future, to create the jobs for the future, but nevertheless send the right message to the marketplace and to the American people.

We have done that before. We saw the longest expansion in America's history. Staring us in the face is the largest economic opportunity of a lifetime. The energy marketplace is a \$6 trillion market with 6 billion potential users today, rising to about 9 billion over the next 30 years. But we are not engaged in that. Two years ago, China produced 5 percent of the world's solar panels. Today, they produce 60 percent, and the United States doesn't have one company in the top 10 companies of the world's solar panel producers. What are we doing? The biggest transformational market staring the United States in the face is the energy market, and we should be here putting an energy policy in place, an education policy in place, an infrastructure investment policy in place, and a research policy for technology and medical that soars, that takes America into the future, creates the jobs we need for the next generations, and reduces the deficit in responsible ways, not in this unbelievable reckless, meat axe, hatchet budget that is being presented to us by the House of Representatives. We need to find common ground.

The minority continues to criticize President Obama about the lack of progress in creating jobs. Last month, the economy added 192,000 jobs and the unemployment rate declined from 9 percent to 8.9 percent. This is one of the best job reports since the recession began more than 3 years ago. It shows that the economic recovery is beginning to gain momentum. However the unemployment rate is still too high and we need both small and big businesses to increase jobs if we are going to see a meaningful decrease in unemployment. The House continuing resolution will make that more difficult.

Republican economist Mark Zandi says that now is not the time to implement the cuts included in the House continuing resolution. In a recent report, Zandi said. "The economy is adding between 100,000 and 150,000 per

month—but it must add closer to 200,000 jobs per month before we can say the economy is truly expanding again. Imposing additional government spending cuts before this has happened, as House Republicans want, would be taking an unnecessary chance with the recovery."

Zandi estimates that the cuts included in the Republican continuing resolution would lead to 700,000 fewer jobs by the end of 2012. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said last week that the Republican continuing resolution would reduce growth and cost our economy about a couple hundred thousand jobs.

Last month, a Goldman Sachs economist warned that the Republican cuts could reduce economic growth in the United States by 1.5 to 2 percentage points this year.

Additional spending cuts would also go against the thrust of our economic policies. The Federal Reserve is holding short-term interest rates close to zero and purchasing hundreds of billions of dollars in long-term Treasury bonds, in an effort to hold down long-term interest rates. The tax cut agreement we made last year is also helping to create jobs and boost our economy. It doesn't raise taxes, includes a 2 percent payroll tax holiday, extends emergency unemployment insurance benefits and allows businesses to expense their investments this year.

The American people deserve better than the approach taken by the House of Representatives that cuts critically needed research funding, eliminates jobs and reduce economic growth, hurts our competitiveness and could push our economy into a "double dip" recession.

There is a better way for us to resolve our budget problems. Let's go back to what worked before and can work again if we are willing to bite the bullet. In the early 1990s, our economy was faltering because deficits and debt were freezing capital. We had to send a signal to the market that we were capable of being fiscally responsible. We did just that and as result we saw the longest economic expansion in history, created more than 22 million jobs, and generated unprecedented wealth in America, with every income bracket rising. But we did it by making tough choices.

Now is the moment for America to reach for the brass energy ring—to go for the Moon here on Earth by building our new energy future—and, in doing so, create millions of steady, higher paying jobs at every level of the economy. Make no mistake: Jobs that produce energy in America are jobs that stay in America. The amount of work to be done here is just stunning. It is the work of many lifetimes. And it must begin now. This shouldn't be a partisan issue, but instead of coming together to meet the defining test of a new energy economy and our future.

There is a bipartisan consensus just waiting to lift our country and our fu-

ture if Senators are willing to sit down and forge it and make it real. The President's fiscal commission made very clear that our budget cannot be balanced by cutting spending alone. The American people deserve a serious dialogue and adult conversation within the Congress about our fiscal situation, discretionary spending, entitlements, and revenues. We need to work together in a bipartisan process to develop a long-term solution to reduce both our current budget deficit and our staggering debt. And, yes, we will need to reduce Federal spending and make appropriate changes to our entitlement programs to meet the fiscal challenges facing our country. But everything everything—tax reform, spending and entitlements—needs to be on the table.

Mr. President, this is one of the moments the Senate was intended to live up to to provide leadership. To find common ground. To level with the American people and be honest with each other. We will no doubt continue to be frustrated and angry from time to time, but I believe that more often than not, we can rise to the common ground of great national purpose. A lot of us like to talk about American exceptionalism. But now we need to get beyond the permanent campaign and the ideological agenda—and instead do the exceptional things that will keep America exceptional for generations to come.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all remaining morning business time be yielded back.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, morning business is closed.

PATENT REFORM ACT OF 2011

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 23, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 23) to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide for patent reform.

Pending:

Reid/Ensign amendment No. 143, to include public institutions of higher education in EPSCOR jurisdictions in the definition of a micro entity.

Reid amendment No. 152 (to Reid amendment No. 143), to provide an effective date.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, American ingenuity and innovation have been a cornerstone of the American economy from the time Thomas Jefferson examined the first patent to today. The Founders recognized the importance of promoting innovation. The Constitution explicitly grants Congress the